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**How to Tell the Porcelain
of
Chai Yao**



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How to Tell the Porcelain
of
Chai Yao

"The King from the Kiln"

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How to Tell the Porcelain of **Chai Yao**

That Chinese porcelain has had no equals in the world is universally recognized. This fact is well borne out by the name "China" given to pottery or porcelain wares by Westerners. We have found in the books that the word "Tzŭ" (瓷) was given to fine pottery; and that both "Tao" (陶) and "Tzŭ" (瓷) are earthen wares, which were first made at the time of Yen Ti (2838 B.C.). From Yu Yü to Han Dynasty Chinese pottery was given the name of Tao and not until late in the Tang Dynasty did it take up a glaze and assume the name of porcelain. More than ten specimens of pottery wares from Hsing Yao, Yüeh Yao and Pi Sê Yao (Yao being the Chinese word for kiln) can still be found at present day. Recently, during the course of road building in Shensi and Honan provinces, pottery wares from these kilns have been occasionally dug up. But they are so rare and unknown that even authorities on pottery and porcelain can hardly specify them and merely classify them as Specimens of porcelain of Tang and Sung Dynasties. Pottery or porcelain of Tang Dynasty had for the substance of its body sand or clay. The Chi Tzŭ or Kang substance did not appear in pottery bodies until the period of the Five Dynasties. This illustrates the transition of the the substance of which the body of Chinese pottery wares of early periods was made.

Authorities on Chinese pottery or porcelain, in later ages, when coming across specimens of ancient pottery wares, have always hesitated to comment on them owing to their great antiquity and the lack of authentic references. Therefore, they would not profess to know anything beyond the productions of the five well-known kilns of Chai, Ju, Kuan, Kê, and Ting. Although productions from Ju, Kuan, Kê, and Ting kilns are very rarely seen, yet there are still some of their specimens being kept by some people. As regards productions from Chai Yao, they are just as rare and as precious as morning stars and phenix. "A piece of brick from Chai Yao," says a Chinese proverb "is worth a thousand dollars." This well illustrates its rarity and preciousness.

According to researches, Chai Yao productions were burned during the reign of Hsien Tê of Posterior Chou Dynasty (954-959 A.D.). Chai Yao was located in Chêng Chou, Honan, deriving its name from the then reigning king, Shih Tsung whose surname was Chai. It was then only referred to as Yü Yao or Imperial Kiln, and not until in the Sung Dynasty was it given the name of Chai Yao for sake of differentiation. Porcelain from Chai Yao is as blue as the sky, as clear as a mirror, as thin as paper, and as resonant as a musical stone of jade. It has clay or sand for the substance of the body. A glimpse of yellow clay appears at the feet or pedestals. It is smooth, delicate, well-made, remarkably colored, and is considered the best of all kiln productions and unimitable in later ages.

I have been collecting antiques for nearly forty years. The Chai Yao productions I have been keeping are so remarkably bright that nothing can be compared with them. They are indeed rare and precious in the world.

Note: Since the productions of Chai Yao have scarcely been seen for more than one thousand years, how can I ascertain what are in my possession are such productions? I can do so and comment on them because they are fine, smooth, having remarkable coloring, and were mostly skilfully and delicately made. I have also the wares of Yüeh Yao, which were produced before Chai Yao, but the former are not as fine and smooth as the later. As to those wares made after Chai Yao, such as the productions of Sung and Ming Dynasties, and those made during the reign of Kang Yung and Chien Emperors, yet they are not as fine and as smooth as Chai Yao, although the coloring of their glaze shows fine work. If not the productions of Chai Yao, what else can find no equals in fineness both before and after Chai Yao productions.

Now, for the purpose of exhibiting them to my co-lovers of arts, I have taken them out of privacy, and, here I enumerate a number of extracts, from Chinese Authorities dealing with productions from Chai Yao. These, I believe, will serve us as illustrations and as grounds for further study.

T. Y. CHEN.

(A Chinese Scholar of Chen Village.)

1. "Specimens from Chai Yao are found in the North, having a sky-blue hue, smooth, fine, with yellow sand and pedestals, very rarely seen in later ages."—From I Men Kuang Tu (夷門廣牘).

2. "Ancients have commented that productions of Chai Yao is as blue as sky, as clear as mirror, as thin as paper, and as resonant as a musical stone of jade."—From Ku Ying Tai's Po Wu Yao Lan (谷應泰博物要覽).

3. "Productions from Chai Yao are most precious and rarely seen. I have heard that they were made as blue as sky, as clear as mirror, as thin as paper, and as resonant as a musical stone of jade."—From Wen Cheng Hêng's Chang Wu Chih (文震亨長物志).

4. "Chai Yao productions are of fine make and remarkable coloring, and the best among productions from all kilns."—From Huang I Chêng's Shih Wu Kan Chu (黃一正事物紀珠).

5. "As has been said, Chai Yao, was built in Pien (modern Honan) to supply the imperial household with porcelain articles. Emperor Shih Tsung once ordered some articles to be manufactured just like the blue sky peeping through the clouds after rain. Indeed commentations on porcelain, nowadays, have always referred to Chai, Ju, Kuan, Kê, and Ting. But specimens from Chai Yao are almost unprocurable. Any fragments from a broken Chai vessel may be used as adornments for hats or chains and considered very valuable. According to tradition, the sparkles of a piece of Chai ware darted one's eyes, and its reflection could push back an on-coming arrow. The former statement is probably true, while the latter is altogether unfounded exaggeration."—From Tang Ying's A Study of Porcelains (唐英瓷器肆考).

6. "No perfect ware of Chai Yao can be found. But recent discoveries have found a few perfect ones. Ma Bu An showed me a vessel, oblong in form, seven inches in diameter, dark-blue in wavering colors. Mere 'blue sky after rain,' cannot sufficiently portrait its picturesqueness. Mr. Ma said 'I could style it a purple heaven'."—From Chi Sung Tang's Shih Shiao Lu (七頌堂識小錄).

7. "Commentators on porcelain must always make reference to productions from Chai, Ju, Kuan, Kê, and Ting. Chai productions can hardly be found now. Formerly I saw a little fragment from a shattered Chai vessel and the said fragment was used as an adornment on a chain. It's brightness in color is same as had been referred to, but a little thicker."—From Chang Ying Wen's Ching Pi Tsang (張應文清秘藏).

8. "Wares from Chai Yao were produced at Chêng Chou, Honan, in Northern China. According to tradition

they were made during Chow Shih Tsung's time and thereby derived the name of Chai Yao wares. They have a sky-blue coloring, and are smooth and fine."—From Ming Tu Lung Kao Pang Yü Shih (明屠隆考槃餘事).

9. "Posterior Chou Dynasty had its seat of government at Pien. Pien, in Tang Dynasty, belonged to the Inspectorate of Honan. According to Official Geography of Tang Dynasty, Honan Inspectorate paid tributes of porcelain wares. From this it is evident that this place was suitable for pottery works. The Chén Ho official Kilns of Sung Dynasty also sprang up at Pien. Yu was also somewhere within Honan Inspectorate during the Tang Dynasty. Chai Yao was located in its capital."

10. "Kao Dan Jen wrote a Sung Chiün song on a certain porcelain bottle, and in its commentary he said any shattered piece from a Chai ware had been usually made into ornaments or set up as curious, because it was hard to procure and therefore precious."

11. Mr. Wang Yu Yang wrote in his Hsiang Tsu Recollection: "A certain nobility had a bowl of genuine blue, sparkling in four directions. How fortunate had he been!"

12. "Only Chai porcelain has the color of sky-blue. Imitations made from Ju Yao (kiln) bear very little resemblance, and Sung Chang Pai has mistaken them for Pi Sé Yao's productions. In quoting 'clear sky after rain,' he has mistaken the word 'clear' for the word 'blue.' Further, commentaries in the 'Cha Ching' (Tea Book) are found to have remarked that Yüeh Chow productions are the best. By this he evidently referred to Lung Chiüan Yao wares. These statements are all found in Liu Ting poetry Discussions."

13. "Pottery wares of blue or green coloring have always been esteemed since olden times. Ching (Dynasty) porcelain noted for its Piao color; Tang, for emerald; Posterior Chou, for sky-blue; Wu and Yüeh, for Pi Shê. Sung porcelain has various colorings. Porcelain made in Ju Kiln, in the Sung Dynasty, has a light blue color. Kuan Yao and Kê Yao productions with whitish-blue color are considered best. Productions of Tung Yao and Lung Chiian all have a blue color. Until Ming Dynasty, Pi Sé was extinct."—From Diaries of Loving Sun Hall. (愛日堂鈔).

14. "Ancient porcelains of blue color are preferred for drinking (tea or wine) purposes. As for serving purposes on a dinner table, porcelains of white tones and blue flowers are considered more tasteful as a matter of artistic conceptions. Tsou Yang, in his Fu wrote 'Take out the blue porcelain cups while the wine matures.' Lu Yu's Ching (a book) contains a passage reading: 'Yüeh (Chekiang province) porcelain is blue, while the tea green.' Chi Chi (also a book) also says, 'Hold it (tea) with a emerald part.' Chi Nan Chin's poem; 'When we hear the rustling pines and the murmuring streams, we haste to order for a blue porcelain cup.' Tung Po's poem remarks that the blue of the oval cup seems as if floating up an oderiferous vapor. Judging from these passages it is evident that drinking vessels of olden times are mostly of blue color. However, the color referred to here is not all an exact equal to the blue of the Chai wares.

15. "With regard to the blue colors of porcelain vessels, there are many variations. The blue of Chai Yao and Ju Yao productions is a light blue; of Kuan Yao, Nei Yao, Kê Yao, Tung, Yao and Hsiang Yao productions,

a light greenish blue; of Lung Chiian and Chang Yao productions, an emerald; and of Yüeh Yao and Yao Yao, a Pien (bluish white) color. But ancient commentations on porcelain have generalized these various colors into one color, the 'blue.'

16. "The various kilns at Ching Tê Chen give different descriptions to the so-called ceramic blue. Some say that it is blue on white, ground, as is also the 'lightly delineated blue,' in which the blue approaches ultramarine but differs in its own degree of tint. Then there is the imitated ancient pottery, which bears similar blue to the age-honored ware. Again there is the 'clear-up sky blue,' azure, coming very near to deep ultramarine. Still, the ware produced by the factories at Ching Tê Chen after the Ju Yao shows a bluish color tinged with some ultramarine, unlike cosmetic blue which is in closer vicinity to green. According to 'A study of porcelain,' the color of Ju Yao resembles that of Kê Yao but of a deeper shade. This is, however, a mistake in recognizing blue as associated with green. The author seems to disregard the identity between the pale blue of Ju Yao and the good moonlight ultramarine of the present. As a matter of fact, the Ching Tê Chen factory ware is the direct facsimile after the genuine Ju Yao taken out from the imperial palace. It is more commonly known as the 'clear sky after rain.'"—From Ching Tê Chen Ceramics (景德鎮陶錄).

17. According to a study of Chinese porcelain, it is said that the pedestals or feet of ancient porcelain vessels are purposely made heavy so that they can stand well and firm. Therefore, the feet of Chai wares are generally made of yellow sand, and Kuan, Kê and Lung Chiian wares have iron pedestal. But this is

erroneous. For, during the Posterior Chou Dynasty, the biscuits of porcelain wares, owing to the lack of any other better material, are generally made up of yellow sand, hence the pedestals are also of yellow sand. The iron feet referred to in the above book are by no means real iron. They are made of black clay and therefore look like iron.

18. "A certain person had a fragment of a Chai vessel and asked for it a price of a several hundred dollars. He said that the fragment if inlaid on a helmet might protect one from bullets in battle. However, he was not, after all, certain of the truth of what he had just said. I told him to hang it and shoot at it. If the bullets could not pierce or break it, it ought to be worth more than the price he asked for; but if they did break it, what he said was not true, he should not then demands any payment. He refused, saying that I was not an expert to judge on antiques, and went away with it hastily. Afterwards I heard he had sold it to a rich family for a hundred dollars. In my opinion, Chai porcelain is only noted for its skilful, blue coloring and it is only absurd to attribute to it such wonderful charms."—From *As I Have Heard* (如是我聞).

19. "The so-called 'as blue as the sky, as clear as mirror, as thin as paper'—the three qualities of Chai productions—is undoubtedly referred to the quality of the glaze and not the body. Porcelain wares made before Yuan Dynasty, in some cases, have thin bodies. However, their thinness can not be compared with that of the Ming wares. This means merely the glaze surface. That Ching Pi Tsang had attributed this kind of thinness to the body of a fragment of Chai ware is rather incorrect.

20. "As reported, a certain family of Hankow possessed a Chai Yao ware. This might be the blue bowl of Bing Yu Tsu Jen. This bowl had been brought by a native of Hupeh, who, I suspect might be the man named Wan Han. Originally this bowl belonged to Yin Shien Prince. It is the best production of Sung Dynasty. But it is still disputable whether it is a Chai ware. Prince Yin Shien styled himself, Bing Yu Tsu Jen, 'The owner of Ice-Jade Hall,' and from this name, it is probable that he might have a collection of Yueh Chow Yao Wares."—From Tao Ya (鈔跋)

21. "Chai Yao was located in Chêng Chou, Honan, and was the very one built by Shih Tsung. According to tradition, Shih Tsung had ordered some articles to be manufactured just like the blue sky peeping through the clouds after rain. From this, I discern that in the saying 'as blue as the sky, as clear as a mirror, as thin as paper, as resonant as a musical stone of jade,' the phrase as thin as paper, is undoubtedly referred to its glaze surface and not its body. The phrase 'as blue as the sky' is also not wholly consonant with facts. For Chai Yao productions are, with doubt, chiefly of sky blue color, but there are still, according to the book of Po Wu Yao Lan, many other colorings of greens. Blue is, then, not the only color. Most of the green colored wares have cracks on their glaze surfaces and where there is no glaze, the body appears to be of yellow clay. Nevertheless the body is smooth and fine and wares of such make-up are the best productions of their kind. These wares had already become rare in the Ming Dynasty. Recently, during the course of road building many ancient pottery or porcelain wares have been dug up and among them are

found specimens very similar to these. I have seen them at one of my friends. (In other places, I have also seen some of the specimens here mentioned, but they are of deep black color and not real Chai Wares). I suspect that no "precious things should be long hidden from human eyes."—From Hsii Chih Hun's Yin Liu Chai Shui Tzü (許之衡飲流齋說盜).

With regard to the Chai Yao wares possessed by my family, they are priceless and seldom seen in the world. Each of them will cost ten or twenty thousands of pounds sterling. After my father retired from office to Chen Village, in the year 1911, he compiled a book entitled "How to Tell the Porcelain of Chai Yao" in order to let people in general know what Chai Yao is. Hence, he has been examining his collection with famous antiquarians as an amusement. During the summer vacation, I translated the work into English for the convenience of those westerners interested in this oriental art, so that these highly invaluable historic masterpieces may not remain unknown forever.

Ts Ts CHEN.

按柴窯實爲吾國重器若周之赤刀大訓天球河圖較之宋均其貴重奚啻倍蓰近年中西人士研究瓷學日益精進尙鮮有見眞柴窯者因命長兒知耻譯爲英文排印於後以廣其傳 程村居士又識

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語可以想見陶錄謂其青如天明如鏡薄如紙聲如磬

然薄如紙一語乃指泐言非指盜胎言也

泐薄如紙凡
盜皆然古人

謂柴窯薄如紙者正極言其胎骨之
薄耳許氏之說殆亦未見柴窯者也

青如天一語亦不

盡然柴窯固以天青爲主但據博物要覽則尙有蝦青

豆青豆綠等色非天青一色也泐中有細紋開片見於

豆綠者較多無泐之處悉是黃土然滋潤細媚爲古來

諸窯之冠在明代已不易見近日築路掘出陶器頗多

間有類此者嘗於某公坐上見之

余亦於某某諸公坐
中見之皆係出土唐

瓷光色黯黲非柴窯也或者天壤奇寶不肯終秘人間耶

許之衡

飲流齋說瓷

不指胎骨而言元以前之瓷皿雖亦偶有薄胎者要亦不能如明瓷脫胎之薄也此言薄如紙者蓋謂所上之
泐其薄如紙也著者未見柴窯故其說如此試問凡屬瓷窯有不薄如紙者乎清秘藏所述繩環一片竟以紙薄屬之於胎骨殆不其然

傳聞漢口人家藏有一柴窯器皿或卽冰玉主人之天青盤歟盤爲湖北人買去或卽萬航歟盤爲怡賢親王故物乃宋器之精美者未必卽爲柴窯也怡邸自號冰玉豈藏有越州窯耶

匱 正

柴窯在河南鄭州卽柴世宗所創也相傳當日請器式世宗批其狀曰雨過天青雲破處者般顏色作將來二

承載器燒故有古取沉重之說

有客攜柴窯片瓷索數百金云嵌於冑臨陣可以避火器然無由知其確否余曰何不繩懸此物以銃發鉛丸擊之如果辟火不碎價數百金不爲多如碎則辟火之說不確理不能索償也客不肯曰公於賞鑒非當行殊煞風景急懷之去後聞鬻於貴家竟得百金夫君子可欺以其方難罔以非其道礮火橫衝如電霆下擊豈區區瓷片所能禦且雨過天青不過泐色精妙耳究由人造非出神功何破裂之餘片尙有靈如是耶如是我聞

柴窯所謂青如天明如鏡薄如紙三者均指泐汁而言

如古窯之青若霽青之青亦近深藍色汝窯瓷色鎮廠所倣者色青而帶藍光非近碧之粉青也肆攷謂汝窯瓷色如哥而深則誤認青爲近碧解矣不知汝瓷所謂淡青色實今之好月藍色鎮廠蓋內發眞汝器所倣俗亦呼爲雨過天青以上景德鎮陶錄

肆攷謂古人以足載器器足多取沉重柴窯足每粗黃土官哥龍泉皆鐵足此非也按周之柴窯其時鮮佳胚故胎質用黃土足亦黃土非另造續成者卽鐵足亦因鐵骨泥作質故胚足露鐵色非另造鐵足安上唐氏不知胚裝匣燒匣內尙有渣餅砂渣墊足只疑另有器足

佳鄒陽賦醪釀既成綠瓷是啟陸羽經越瓷青而茶色
綠七啟盛以翠樽季南金詩聽得松風并澗水急呼縹
色綠瓷杯東坡詩青浮卵盃香觀數公句可知尙青止
盃蓋之類亦非如柴汝之青色也

同一青瓷也而柴窯汝窯云青其青則近淺藍色官窯
內窯哥窯東窯湘窯等云青其青則近淡碧色龍泉章
窯云青其青則近翠色越窯岳窯云青則近縹色古人
說陶但通稱青色耳

景德鎮諸窯稱青亦不同有云青乃白地青花也淡描
青亦然其青皆近藍色分濃淡有倣古窯稱青者則亦

王漁洋香祖筆記云貴人得盃一枚其色正碧流光四照何其幸歟

雨後天青止柴窯器色如是汝窯所倣已不類宋長白誤以爲秘色窯器且稱雨後晴天色訛青爲晴又茶經註所云越州爲上是指龍泉窯器皆載柳亭詩話中

自古陶重青品晉曰縹瓷唐曰千峯翠色宋周曰雨過天青吳越曰秘色其後宋器雖具諸色而汝窯在宋燒者淡青色官窯哥窯以粉青爲上東窯龍泉其色皆青至明而秘色始絕

愛日堂鈔

古瓷尚青宜品茗酒耳若肴饌則素瓷青花白質瓷爲

布庵曰余目之爲絳霄蓋罕覲云

七頌堂識小錄

論窯器必曰柴汝官哥定柴不可得矣余向見殘器一片製如織環者色光則同但差厚耳

張應文清秘藏

明屠隆攷槃餘事載柴窯出北地河南鄭州世傳周世宗柴氏時所燒者故謂之柴窯天青色滋潤細膩

按後周都汴唐屬河南道考唐書地理志河南道貢瓷器之器是其地本宜於陶也宋政和官窯亦起於汴汝亦唐河南道所轄之州柴窯卽在其都內

高澹人宋均窯瓶歌注云近人得柴窯碎片皆以裝飾玩具蓋難得而可貴也

柴窯器最貴世不一見聞其製青如天明如鏡薄如紙聲如磬

文震亨長物志

柴窯製精色異爲諸窯之冠

黃一正事物紺珠

柴窯起於汴相傳當日請器式世宗批其狀曰雨過天青雲破處者般顏色作將來今論窯器者必曰柴汝官哥定而柴久不可得矣得殘器碎片製爲冠飾縫環玩具亦足珍貴世傳柴片寶瑩射目光可却矢寶瑩則有之却矢未必然蓋難得而重言之也

唐英瓷器肆攷

柴窯無完器近復稍稍出焉馬布庵見示一洗圓而橢面徑七寸黝然深沈光色不定雨後青天尙未足形容

物近四十年所藏柴器光耀奪目不可方物洵希世之珍也
柴窯既爲千餘年來罕見之物余所藏者何以能決其必爲柴窯蓋滋潤細媚色異製精八字評論柴窯實爲至當不移前乎柴窯者如越窯余亦有之既無如此之細潤後乎柴窯者如宋明諸瓷以及康雍乾之瓷器泐色雖精然亦不及其滋媚眞所謂前無古人不敢自秘出示同後無來者非柴窯安有如是之精妙耶

博疋君子考證焉

程村居士謹識

柴窯出北地天青色滋潤細媚足多粗黃土近世少見

夷門廣牘

昔人論柴窯曰青如天明如鏡薄如紙聲如磬

谷應泰

博物要覽

柴窯考證

秦豫築路偶有發現考古者莫得而名之概以唐瓷宋瓷目之而已蓋唐瓷皆沙胚泥胚五代以後始有瓷胎缸胎此又胚胎之遞嬗也後世說瓷諸家偶見古瓷均以代遠年湮無從考證不敢妄肆品評故言瓷皆自柴汝官哥定始汝官哥定雖亦不多見然世間尙有存者至柴器則珍逾星鳳矣謠云柴窯片瓦值千金極言其難得可貴也考柴窯乃後周顯德初年所燒窯在河南鄭州以世宗姓柴故名然當時祇稱御窯至宋始以柴窯別之其瓷青如天明如鏡薄如紙聲如磬沙泥爲胚足露黃土滋潤細媚色異製精爲古來諸窯之冠非後人所能僞爲鄙人搜求古

柴窯考證

中華製瓷實冠寰球爲世界所公認外人名吾國曰支那
并以名吾瓷考諸載籍瓷爲陶器之堅緻者陶與瓷皆瓦
器也瓦器之作肇自炎帝有虞洎漢皆以陶名綠瓷見於
漢賦縹瓷稱於晉代然猶未顯至六朝隋唐渤海俗作法漸
興而瓷之名始大著矣

陶本作匱說文瓦器也類篇陶器堅緻者據此則陶

神農作瓦器史記舜陶于河濱器也汲冢周書

不苦窳戶子昆吾作陶又正字通匱亦音遙與窯同南山
有漢武舊匱說文瓦器也類篇陶器堅緻者據此則陶
器發源最古降至後世製作日精始名爲瓷漢鄒陽酒賦
醪醴既成綠瓷既啓晉潘岳笙賦傾縹瓈以酌醕醕是瓷
之稱由來已久蓋陶爲瓦器之總名而瓈乃陶器中之精
緻者後世則以有泐爲瓈無泐爲陶分陶與瓈爲二於是
瓷之名始獨樹一幟耳

有邢窯越窯秘色窯等十餘種傳於世近年



This article is of azure,
Neither blue nor green;
Only the cloudless sky after rain
Can approach its color.

原器天青

非藍非碧

雨過雲破

其中之色

方可儻



皇

詠

辛亥冬日

程村居士

謹題

宣统三年辛亥

止水齋秀證

吳興沈鑑題